

Referral Information

How can my family enroll in the Guide By Your Side Program?

- **Inform your child's audiologist or doctor that you are interested in meeting a Parent Guide**
- **Sign the Consent form, so that your provider may share information related to your child's hearing loss with the Guide By Your Side Program**
- **Your provider will make a referral to the Guide By Your Side Program**
- **A Parent Guide will contact you in a timely manner and work to meet with you at your earliest convenience**
- **Your Parent Guide will visit with your family, in your home, at times that work for you**
- **If you have questions, concerns or want to make a referral, please call the Guide By Your Side Program Coordinator at 608-822-3756 or 888-656-8556**

Enrolling in the Guide By Your Side Program is easy, confidential and free of charge.

Wisconsin Families for Hands & Voices and WESP-DHH Outreach work collaboratively to offer the GBYS Program



Wisconsin Families for Hands & Voices is dedicated to supporting families with children with hearing loss without bias around communication modes or methodology



The Wisconsin Educational Services Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (WESP-DHH) Outreach supports children who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind by providing a broad array of services to families and educational programs. Services are provided at no cost and are based on the needs of each individual child



WESP-DHH is a program of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Division for Learning Support: Equity and Advocacy.

A PROGRAM FOR
FAMILIES



of a child who is deaf,
hard of hearing, or
deafblind

A program of:

Wisconsin Families for Hands & Voices and

WESP-DHH Outreach

Laurie Nelson, Parent Liaison

Guide By Your Side Coordinator

888-656-8556 toll-free

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What is unique about the Guide By Your Side Program?

GBYS Parent Guides are parents of children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind who have received special training that prepares them to function in this important capacity. This training provides a strong foundation in supporting families without a bias towards communication modes or methods, as well as a functional understanding of formal systems and services available to families and their children. Parent Guides are able to bring their direct experience, specialized knowledge, and personal compassion to their role while making the family's needs their prime agenda. GBYS Parent Guides can provide:

- Timely emotional support at the time of screening and/or confirmation of hearing loss
- Direct parent/peer support and networking
- Information and resource sharing specific to hearing loss, including insights on navigating the systems from a parent perspective
- Support to families throughout the early intervention years by combining an experienced parent's insight with knowledge of early intervention and educational systems
- Continuity of support to families throughout a child's life, specifically at the time of transition from Birth-3 to the early childhood placement

What is the Guide By Your Side Program?

Parent Guides will meet with families in their homes or at a mutually agreed upon public location such as a library or playground. In some cases, phone meetings may be appropriate but the goal should always be direct personal contact. Visits should:

- Provide parents with the opportunity to establish a supportive relationship with another parent of a child who is deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind or deaf with additional disabilities
- Provide parents with unbiased information regarding communication options and considerations for their child
- Provide parents with an understanding of the unique needs of infants, children and teenagers who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind or deaf with additional disabilities
- Link parents to resources available locally, regionally, statewide and nationally
- Include participation in a joint visit with families and their county Birth to 3 Program and/or the local school district

This project is funded through an IDEA discretionary grant from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Quotes from Parents

“Our Parent Guide was outstanding in every aspect. She made us aware of programs and gave us support to pursue them. She was the boost we needed to find resources for our daughter. Thank you for offering the GBYS Program!”

“We were so relieved to speak with another parent who had ‘been there’. Our Parent Guide helped us realize we were not alone on our child’s journey with hearing loss.”

“The best thing we did for our family after diagnosis was to get involved with the GBYS Program. It made a huge difference in our knowledge and outlook regarding our daughter’s future.”

Parent Guides Speak your Language

- English
- American Sign Language (ASL)
- Spanish / Espanol
- Hmong